



Grand Prix in Downtown, Not on Neighborhood Streets

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, July 30, 2007

Four people died in Almaden Valley on July 24th, 2007—two teenage boys just beginning their lives as young adults and a married couple walking together for a stroll.

One teenage boy was driving his car with a friend as a passenger. He lost control of his car on Graystone Lane as he was traveling faster than the posted speed limit. He hit and killed a married couple walking on the side of the road before slamming into a tree, only to have his car explode into a fire. Everyone was dead at the scene. This was so tragic that I was despondent when I read the story.

The real tragedy here is the innocent victims that were on a walk who were killed by these kids. The Batras often took walks together like so many couples after work.

Think about it: you are happily married, proud of your kids, chatting about your first upcoming grandchild, holding hands and then BAM! The impact of the speeding car separates the two of you where you die on your neighborhood street. This same incident could occur in any neighborhood of San Jose.

I have done some early morning walks in different neighborhoods in my district watching traffic patterns. I noticed what many of you already know: the speeders often live on the same street they speed on. There is this notion of freedom with a car and that you should be able to drive however fast you desire. There are consequences from this notion, but often times we learn the lesson too late.

What could have changed this? Certainly a cop on every corner would stop this behavior, but we know that this is not possible. However, we do know that a traffic officer covers his or her salary with fines they give out, making hiring traffic officers revenue neutral for the city.

Cities often have to solve the problems that federal or state governments choose to ignore.

We will never have enough police to patrol all streets, but if we have higher fines that deter deviant behavior, then that is what would actually change drivers' behavior.

Let's work with our local state legislators on writing a bill that allows cities the ability to raise the amount of the fine on neighborhood streets to deter this deadly behavior.

I have had five neighborhood meetings and speeding is a top issue of concern, and the residents are fed up and so am I. It's time to send a wakeup call to speeders.

What would you propose to really solve speeding on neighborhood streets? How would you pay for it?

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